



# The Zion Letter

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## The Great End—Time Islamic War?

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Suddenly, in a matter of days, a seemingly unknown group of Islamic terrorists calling itself **ISIS** (The Islamic state of Iraq and Syria), blitzkriegs out of Syria into Northern and North Western Iraq taking control of border crossings, towns and Iraq's second largest city, Mosul, with a population of more than two million! The Iraqi army in the north dropped their weapons, many removed their uniforms and fled along with Christians and other Muslims. The **ISIS** warriors instantly bring **Sharia** law wherever they take control: Women are forced to cover themselves from head to toe, wear gloves and cover their faces if they go out. They are not allowed out without a male chaperone. According to *The Express*, there "have come horrific stories of brutality including the alleged filming of mass executions... crucifixion, the amputation of limbs for criminal acts (beheading of enemies) and worse." (1)

ISIS is an offshoot of Al-Qaeda that has been operating in north-east Syria for over a year quite freely. According to a news report I heard, our government has known of their existence, but has done little to nothing to curb them from training and acquiring weapons of war. ***"ISIS is composed of fundamentalist Sunni Muslims, the group that targeted the Iraqi government and American forces in Iraq, as well as Shia Muslims and Christians (both of whom it considers heretics) and killed civilians of all faiths in indiscriminate attacks. It expanded into Syria when that country's uprising turned into a war between President Bashar Assad (who is backed by Iran's Shia leadership) and the rebels he had tried to crush. One of the best equipped and funded militias on the ground... ISIS took control of the eastern rebel-held city of Raqqa in 2012 and expanded along the border with Turkey. Foreign fighters flocked to join it,"*** (2).

***"As ISIS' name suggests, the interests of the group and its current leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi go beyond Syria. Its members believe that the world's Muslims should live under one Islamic state ruled by Sharia law (a Caliphate). War and instability in Syria and Iraq have given it an opportunity to attempt to build a proto-state in the adjacent Sunni majority areas of these two countries, before spreading further."*** (Ibid)

#### Let's Clear Things Up:

There are two basic branches of Islam in the world, Sunni and Shia or Shiite. Sunnis far outnumber

Shiites. For example, the only Shiite ruled countries in the world are Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Iraq used to be led by a Sunni, Saddam Hussein, so Iraq still has a very large Sunni population. Syria is led by Bashar Al-Assad who is part of a Shia sect and is backed by Iran. Most other Muslim countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Asian Islamic States, and African Muslim nations as well as the Palestinians and Kurds etc... are led by Sunni Muslims.

The key difference between Sunni and Shiite beliefs has to do with the prophet Muhammad's succession of leadership. ***"At Muhammad's death in 632, Abu Bakr, a close companion of the Prophet, became his successor, or caliph. Most Muslims agreed that the most able and pious of the Prophet's followers should be his caliphs. Their followers would come to be known as the orthodox branch of Islam, or Sunnis. A few Muslims disagreed, arguing for a line of succession based on bloodlines. To those dissenters, the succession should have immediately gone to Ali, the fourth caliph -- who took the helm after some of his followers assassinated Caliph Uthman, his predecessor. Followers of Ali would eventually form Shiite Islam."***(3).

To clarify, Shiites believe that there are 12 Imams or Caliphs who are directly descended from Muhammad. Sunnis believe that God chooses caliphs. There are other differences which we won't get into here. It should be noted that fundamentalist Sunnis and Shiites have killed each other by the tens of thousands throughout history. The current Sunnis under the Iraqi President Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite, are not well treated nor are they included in the Iraqi government. Therefore they are rising up against al-Maliki militantly. Whether it is ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah or the Muslim Brotherhood, these Islamic zealots are a huge threat to the leaders of Muslim regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, etc... The reason is because the main ambition of the leaders of these dictatorship countries is maintaining their power. It really doesn't matter whether the zealots are Sunnis or Shiites. Many of these tyrants such as former General Qaddafi of Libya, the Kings of Jordan and Saudi Arabia fear losing control of their kingdoms to mass uprisings of these zealots.

On the other hand, the ambition of the former Iranian president Ahmadinejad was slightly different. He believed that he was the prophet called by Allah to usher in the Mahdi, or the 12<sup>th</sup> and

final Imam of Shiite Islam. According to Shiite belief, this "pious" man has been living secretly in a cave since 874 A.D. Ahmadinejad's belief was that by causing great global upheaval he could usher in the *Final Caliphate* led by the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam. The



magnificent Mr. Ahmadinejad even made his plans known to the world about ushering in the Caliphate and the Mahdi (12<sup>th</sup> Imam or last Caliph). Now **ISIS (the Suni sect)** says they are establishing a caliphate. The goal of the Caliphate is to unite all Muslims around the world under the caliph. **The only problem for the fundamentalist Sunnis and Shiites is that they don't agree on who that caliph is.** With Ahmadinejad gone, having failed to establish his caliphate and usher in the Islamic messiah as a Shiite, we see radical Sunnis (ISIS) starting their own caliphate. According to Reuters, "**President Barack Obama indicated that while the United States may have for the time being given up on Iraq, it is now concerned at the threat this 'caliphate' poses to neighbors including Jordan, key for its positive relationship with Israel,**"(4). Wow! President Obama is beginning to sound a bit like President Bush!!! King Abdullah of Jordan is terrified of ISIS destabilizing Jordan and possibly taking down his government. So why would he and Mr. Obama be afraid of this? It is because he knows that ISIS' ambitions for power and their caliphate go far beyond Syria and Iraq... ISIS has already changed its name to **ISIL or Islamic State of Iraq and Levant**. Levant is a word for a region of Muslim nations including Cyprus, Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian occupied territories and Syria. So this movement to unify Muslim countries is gaining ground and is already encompassing significantly more territory than northeastern Syria and northern Iraq! When ISIS/ISIL leader Baghdadi, a Sunni Muslim, was released by U.S. forces in 2009, He reportedly told his former captors, "**I'll see you guys in New York.**" (5, The Express). I was watching a major cable news channel about this subject the other night where one of Mr. Baghdadi's Lieutenants said, "**First we go to Baghdad, then we go to Jerusalem.**" I think that President Obama knows full well the intention and ability of ISIS/ISIL to topple Jordan, attack Israel and even wreak havoc in the United States. These guys make Al-Qaeda look like a bunch of country club cave dwellers. So far, they are unstoppable. In addition to destabilizing Muslim countries, ISIS/ISIL is in the business of terrorism and has threatened to attack Great Britain and the U.S. They are very likely to be training in Mexico right now with their .50 caliber machine guns, IEDs, and scores of Toyota 4-Runner pick-up trucks, just waiting for

the right opportunity to jump the U.S. border and bring the fight into the good 'ol USA! I can only hope whoever holds the key to the armory at Fort Bragg will show up for work that day and let our soldiers carry some guns and do their job...

### What does the Bible Say?

Are we really headed for a final conflict between Sunni and Shiite Muslims that will thrust the Islamic world into a great war? The Prophet Jeremiah wrote about it in Jeremiah chapters 50-51, "**For a nation has come up against her (Iraq/Babylon) out of the north; it will make her land an object of horror, and there will be no inhabitant in it. Both man and beast have wandered off, they have gone away!**"

Again Jeremiah writes about Babylon, "**Because of the indignation of the Lord she will not be inhabited, But she will be completely desolate; everyone who passes by Babylon will be horrified and will hiss because of all her wounds. Draw up you battle lines against Babylon on every side,**" **Jeremiah 50:13-14.** Iraq is ancient Babylon and these prophecies have not been fulfilled yet: "**Therefore the desert creatures will live there along with the jackals; The ostriches also will live in it, and it will never be inhabited or dwelt in from generation to generation. As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors, declares the Lord No man will live there, Nor will any son of man reside in it. Behold a people is coming from the north...**" **Jeremiah 50:39-41.**



### Why this massive future judgment on Iraq?

The Lord says, **Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the Lord, intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine; Therefore the nations are going mad,**" **Jeremiah 51:7.** What is the wine of Babylon that causes the nations to go mad? I believe it is oil, black gold, Texas tea... J The Prophet Isaiah wrote about it in relation to "The Day of the Lord" in chapters 13-14. Also, in Revelation 18, Babylon is singled out for the greatest judgment of all the other nations. In fact, there is more scripture devoted to the destruction of Babylon in the Old and New Testament than any other nation. Here again in Revelation 18 we are

reminded of Babylon's power over the world, **"..for all the nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her immorality."**

Isaiah 13-21 talks extensively about God's judgment upon the Muslim nations surrounding Israel, but God points out that Babylon is the instigator and leader of world-wide rebellion toward God. Judgment is also coming to Iraq because of what they did to Israel and the Jewish people: **"For neither Israel nor Judah has been forsaken By his God, the Lord of hosts, Although their land (Israel) is full of guilt Before the Holy One of Israel. Flee from the midst of Babylon..."** **Jeremiah 51:5-6.** This is interesting because in chapter 13 Isaiah laments the fall of Babylon ultimately to the Medes who are ancient Iranians. In fact the destruction will be so complete that according to Isaiah 13:20 Iraq will never be inhabited by another Arab.

In the news, it was said that Prime Minister Netanyahu warned President Obama not to get U.S. forces involved, but to let the Muslims fight each other. Will Iran be the one used by God to destroy Iraq and the new Caliphate being established by ISIS? The West no longer seems to have an appetite to gear up for another battle in the Middle East, so I believe that the coming Muslim war may be a self-destructive war, as in the days of Gideon when the Midianites destroyed themselves, or as in Isaiah 37 where the Angel of the Lord struck 185,000 Assyrians dead in one night. The point is that this whole conflict is bringing our attention back to Iraq/Babylon and the ultimate judgment against her sins.

### Conclusion:

In Isaiah 14, the prophet says this will all take place when God again **"Has compassion on Jacob and again chooses Israel, and settles them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob,"** **Isaiah 14:1.** These strangers are the Messianic gentiles who join with the Messianic Jews and become not just followers of Jesus, but adopted into the family of the Messianic Jewish community. Also Jeremiah says, **"In those days and at that time, declares the Lord, the sons of Israel will come, both they and the sons of Judah as well; they will go along weeping as they go, and it will be the Lord their God they will seek. They will come that they may join themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten,"** **Jeremiah 50:3-5.** Here the Lord is saying that a nation will come against Babylon/Iraq and cause complete and utter desolation there, but it will also cause Israel to seek and find God and enter the "New Covenant" (the everlasting covenant) through faith in Yeshua/ Jesus (Jeremiah 31:31). The good news of all of this is that in the midst of impending war, God is promising that He will start to bring another wave of Jewish people back to Israel, and that they will come to know the Lord. It also means that many Gentiles who walk along side of the Messianic Jews through the fire of this time will be considered "family", and will receive an inheritance in the land of Israel (Ezekiel 47:21).

Perhaps the Blood Red Moons this year are a sign that God is about to judge Iraq and the other nations who have harmed the Jewish people (Joel 3:2). We are undoubtedly living in interesting times, and I encourage you to seek God's face and ask for understanding as to what your part in this season should be.

Those with insight will know what to do. If I'm right about the coming Islamic war between Sunnis and Shiites we quite possibly are on the verge of tremendous world upheaval, the beginning of the great Exodus of Jews from the west, and the fall of Babylon...  
*In Yeshua's love,*  
Rabbi Joe

- Footnotes: 1. <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/483920/Iraq-Isis-Extremists-Dark-Ages-Muslim>  
2. <http://www.economist.com/node/21594770/print>  
3. <http://middleeast.about.com/od/religionsectarianism/a/me070907sunnis.thm?p=1>  
4. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/Iraq/10921583/Isis-strengthens-gr...>

